

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please substitute the following paragraphs for those originally filed in this matter.

[008] In a preferred embodiment, a seatbelt retractor according to the present invention comprises a frictional clutching means equipped in a drum, which reduces rotating speed of a drum shaft in response to the expansion of a spiral spring during a retraction of a webbing. The frictional clutching means may comprise a first rod member that is ~~slideably~~ slidably inserted into a guide element so that the first rod member can slide through the guide element in accordance with expansion of a spiral spring, the first rod member being provided with a guide slot at the center thereof. A restoring spring is disposed at one end of said first rod member. A gear member is pivotally fixed to the wall of a drum by a pivot shaft and is ~~slideably~~ slidably connected to the guide slot by a guide pin. A second rod member laterally slides and engages with teeth of the gear member. Formed at the one end of the second rod member is a recess of semicircular shape for tight contact with the circumference of the drum shaft. Moreover, the second rod member is preferably composed of two parts that are elastically connected to each other by a spring.

[0010] In a preferred embodiment the frictional clutch includes an actuator rod, a friction rod and a linkage. The actuator rod is slidably mounted with the drum and bears against the spiral spring. The friction rod bears against the drum shaft. The linkage is operatively connected to the actuator rod and friction rod so as to apply pressure to the drum shaft in response to expansion of the spiral spring. The friction rod may comprise a first part and a second part with a biasing element acting therebetween. Also, a biasing element preferably acts on the actuator rod to bias it against the spiral spring. The linkage preferably comprises a gear segment ~~pivotably~~ pivotally mounted between the rods with a first end acted on by the actuator rod and a second, geared end engaged with gear teeth formed on the friction rod.

[0013] Fig. 2 is a sectional view of Fig. 1, taken along the line A-A'2A-A; and

[0017] A seat belt retractor according to the present invention also may include a vehicle sensor (not shown), composed of ~~a ball~~ a ball, a ball housing, a pawl, and a latch so as to prevent a webbing from being drawn out in a collision or other abnormal state of the vehicle. As is known in the art, the ball is disposed in the ball housing and moves toward the pawl due to inertia or vibration that occurs in a collision or other abnormal state. Subsequently, the

pawl, pivotally fixed to the retractor, pushes the latch upward to engage with a ratchet wheel mounted on the shaft, whereby the retractor can prevent the webbing from being drawn out. When the webbing is retracted, the latch becomes free from interference with the ratchet wheel so that the ratchet wheel and shaft can freely rotate.

[0019] As shown in Fig. 2, the frictional clutching means is disposed adjacent to the drum shaft 130 in a radial direction of the spiral spring 120. The frictional clutching means comprises a first rod member 11 that laterally slides in response to the expansion of a spiral spring 120 by contacting a proximal end thereof to the outer surface of the spiral spring 120. The first rod member 11 is ~~slideable~~ slidably inserted into a guide element 11a. The first rod member 11 is also provided with an elongated guide slot 11c at the center thereof. Installed at the distal end of the first rod member 11 is a restoring spring 11b for elastically supporting the first rod member 11 so that contact with the spiral spring 120 can be maintained. The frictional clutching means further comprises a gear member 12 pivotally fixed to ~~a drum~~ the drum 100 by a pivot shaft 12b and ~~slideable~~ slidably connected to the guide slot 11c of the first rod member 11 by a guide pin 12a. The frictional clutching means further comprises a second rod member 13 having a toothed part on the surface thereof in order to mesh with the gear member 12 so that the second rod member 13 ~~slideable~~ slidably moves in a lateral direction while the gear member 12 is pivoting in response to the movement of the first rod member 11.